

VZCZCXRO3247  
PP RUEHAG RUEHROV  
DE RUEHUB #0494 1772014  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 252014Z JUN 08  
FM USINT HAVANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3423  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY  
RUEHLU/AMEMBASSY LUANDA PRIORITY 0004  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 000494

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/25/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CU](#) [EU](#)

SUBJECT: FIDEL CASTRO LASHES OUT AT EU DECISION ON CUBA  
SANCTIONS

Classified By: COM Michael E. Parmly for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) While opposition members continue to express disappointment with the EU decision on Cuba sanctions, and fear that it presages another crackdown on their activity, former President Fidel Castro appears to be beside himself with anger over the EU decision.

¶2. (SBU) Fidel wrote at least three "Reflexiones" pieces on the issue over the weekend. Interestingly, none was published in Cuban print media, nor did any appear on radio or TV. Instead, these latest diatribes were put out only on the web at the official cubadebate.cu website. Castro minced no words in his first piece, saying "The disreputable suspension of sanctions against Cuba adopted by the European Union on June 19 has been reported on by 16 different articles in the international press...but now I want to express my own disdain for the enormous hypocrisy surrounding the decision. This is even more evident as it coincides with the brutal European measure to expel from Europe undocumented immigrants who came from Latin America."

¶3. (SBU) With more time to contemplate the EU action, Fidel wrote another item entitled ironically "Truth and Datribes." He opens by attacking developed country spending on development assistance and concludes "Our country has demonstrated that it can resist all kinds of pressure and help other peoples. Can Europe say the same?" He then cites a new UNESCO study praising Cuban education and says "...a country that systematically violates human rights would not reach these high levels of knowledge." Having gotten warmed up, Fidel then launches into the true diatribe, attacking the U.S. and Europe both for their immigration policies, after which he concludes: "I did not write any diatribe against Europe, I simply spoke the truth. If that offends someone, it's not my fault." He then proceeds to attack Europe and the U.S. for the actions of NATO.

¶4. (SBU) After apparently not getting the publicity he expected, on June 23 he published another "Reflexiones" piece complaining that the press was not giving due importance to the UNESCO report on Cuba. He again refers to charges that his earlier pieces were "datribes," and somehow twists that line into an attack against the "slander" perpetrated against Cuba by challenges to its human rights record. He asks rhetorically, "If Europe is taking diplomatic measures against Cuba allegedly in defense of human rights, why does it not take the same measures against the US for its genocidal policy in Iraq...?" He then finishes with a bizarre discussion of the European Cup soccer tournament and preparations for the Olympics.

15. (C) COMMENT: FM Perez Roque has now been quoted as saying that Cuba "defeated" the EU sanctions. That he issued that statement while visiting Angola and not in the lobby of MINREX is noteworthy. The GOC was more than simply hopeful that the EU would drop the sanctions; it was quite confident that it would happen. Apparently, it had not occurred to GOC officials that the EU might drop the sanctions, which had become nothing more than a rhetorical device in any case, and replace them with another statement that the regime would find even more odious. Perez Roque and company most likely are still trying to figure a way to turn the EU statement to their own advantage, but Fidel could not be contained completely. In the past, he probably would have said many of the things contained in his "Reflexiones" in a public speech, and it would have been considered another case of his "never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity." This time, possible damage to Cuba's foreign policy strategy was mitigated by restricting his statements to the official Cuban internet, which is read by possibly even fewer people in Cuba than the official print media outlets Granma and Juventud Rebelde.

PARMLY